abnormal change in river water quality was observed by these agencies.

(b) As a precautionary measure, the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi was asked to take steps to prevent the discharge of adulterated mustard oil into sewer lines/Yamuna river. As an alternative they were advised to promote the use of adulterated oil for such purposes as lighting, soap manufacturing etc.

Production and Import of Camphor

*297. SHRI SATISH CHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the installed capacity, actual production and import of Camphor during the last five years, year-wise and Statewise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the production of Camphor is declining while imports are increasing steeply; if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that heavy imports under OGL and higher tax burden of Central Government excise duty of 18% and State sales tax ranging between 7% to 15% have adversely affected Camphor industry; and

(d) if so, the details of action plan to restore, and promote domestic Camphor industry against manipulations and unfair competition from China?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Camphor is manufactured in the organised sector by four Units in the country. The details of installed capacity and production achieved by these Units during the last five years, year-wise and state-wise, are given below:

State	Installed Capacity .	Production (MTs)				
		1993-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Uttar Pradesh Jammu	4500	2541	4061	3102	3088	3166
& Kashmir	600		839	872	500	450
Maharashtra Andhra	2500				922	960
Pradesh	1000					1191
TOTAL:	8600	2541	4900	3974	4510	5767

Import data of Camphor as per DGCIS publications for the last five years is as under:—

1992-93	147.56
1993-94	949.92
1994-95	244.02
1995-96	839.43
1996-97	211.4*

(b) No, Sir. The production of indigenous Camphor shows an increasing trend since 1995-96. Import of Camphor has been fluctuating.

(c) & (d) Excise duty levied on Cam phor is the same as that levied for al! similar chemicals. The sales tax levied differs from State to State. If there is evidence of unfair competition from China, the industry can initiate antidumping duty proceedings.

Losses due to ban on timber trade in North-East

*298. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ban on all the timber based activities in the seven North-Eastern States has caused a loss of about Rs. 1,480 crores to the national exche-

quer, due to decay of timber lying in the forest;

(b) whether soil is likely to be poisoned on account of timber rots; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to remove timber logs from forests, in order to save I natural habitat as well as soil pollution?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SUR-ESH PRABHU): (a) Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 15.1.1998 in Writ Petition No. 202/95 has issued detailed directions to regulate felling, transportation and processing of timber in the North-Eastern States. Necessary steps have been taken to expedite transportation and disposal of felled timber in conformity with the said directions. The loss in monetary value of felled timber due to deterioration in the quality of timber lying in forests can not be quantified.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Rail connection for Sundergarh in Orissa

*299. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sundergarh district headquarters in Orissa has not been provided with rail link;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to connect Jharsuguda with Bis-rampur via Sundergarh by rail;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a)Yes, Sir. Even though Sundergarh Town, district headquarters of Sundergarh, has not been provided with rail link, the Mumbai—Calcutta main line passes through Sundergarh District and the rail users in the district are served by Rourkela and bondamunda stations. The District is also served by the railway line from Bon-damunda to Ranchi and from Bondamunda to Barsuan via Bimlagarh.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Constraint of resources.

Licences for Hunting Endangered Species

*300. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the 'Tribune' of 4th August, 1998, captioned "Where Government gives licence to kill";

(b) if so, whether hunting of endangered species is allowed in different States, including Jammu and Kashmir under licence issued by the State Govern ments as a royal sport, on payment of prescribed fees for the so called Small games, Big games and Special games;

(c) whether the bound shahtoos trade is also allowed in J&K under licence; and

(d) whether Government have laid down any national policy to protect the endangered species and for prevention of cruelty to animals; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SUR-ESH PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Hunting of animals included in Schedules II, III & IV under Jammu & Kashmir Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1978 is allowed in Jammu & Kashmir under licences issued by the Chief Wildlife Warden.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Trade in wild animals is regulated through the provisions of Wildlife (Pro-tection) Act, 1972 which extends to all the States/UTs except J&K. Prevention or cruelty to animals is regulated through the provisions of The Prevention of